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7. (Amended) The cable tie of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduced thickness channel includes a first channel formed on an inner side of the neck section and a second channel formed on an outer side of the neck section.

REMARKS

This Reply to Office Action is responsive to the Office Action mailed on February 27, 2002. Claims 1-17 are pending in the present application. Applicants have withdrawn claims 10-17, and amended claims 5-7. Accordingly, claims 1-9 are now at issue. A marked-up version of the amended claims is provided on a separate sheet.

With this Reply, Applicants submit a Petition for a One-Month Extension of Time, making Applicants' Reply due on or before June 27, 2002. Accordingly, Applicants' Reply is timely filed.

Applicants hereby confirm the provisional election of claims 1-9. Accordingly, claims 10-17 are withdrawn, with Applicants reserving rights to prosecute claims directed to the non-elected invention in a divisional application.

Claims 5-7 have been amended to more clearly define the invention. These amendments are considered to neither broaden nor narrow the scope of the claims. With these amendments, Applicants believe that the Examiner's rejection under § 112 is rendered moot.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3-6 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Rohaly* (U.S. 5,669,111). Applicants submit that the present invention is patentable over the *Rohaly* reference.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a cable tie having a strap including a first end forming a neck section, a free end opposite the first end, and an intermediate section between

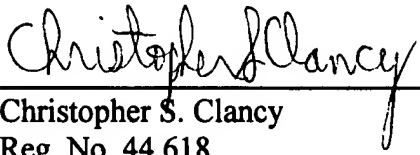
the first end and the free end. A cable tie head is secured to the neck area of the strap at the first end of the strap. Claim 1 recites "the neck section has a width that transitions from a width of B1 to a width E' that is substantially the same as width E, . . ." As described in the specification on page 7, lines 29-30 and as best shown in FIGS. 15 and 18, neck section 130 tapers to substantially match the outer contour and width E of cable head 120. As further described on page 8, lines 11-19, neck section 130 transitions from the narrower strap width B to a width E' that is substantially the same as the width of cable tie head 120.

Contrary to the Examiner's contention, *Rohaly* does not disclose, teach or suggest a neck section having a width that transitions from a narrower width of the strap to a width that is substantially the same as a width of the cable tie head. As shown in FIG. 3 of *Rohaly*, the width of the neck section is greater than the width of strap 12. However, as also shown in FIG. 3 of *Rohaly*, the width of the neck section is substantially less than the width of locking head 20. In fact, the *Rohaly* reference only discloses a neck section having strengthening gussets 24 transitioning the cable tie strap into the cable tie head. As described on page 8, lines 11-19 of the application, Applicants' invention discusses the advantages to increasing the width of the strap at the neck section to match the width of the cable tie head. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the *Rohaly* reference. Moreover, claims 2-9 are asserted to be allowable based on their dependency from allowable claim 1.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claims 1-9 are allowable and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

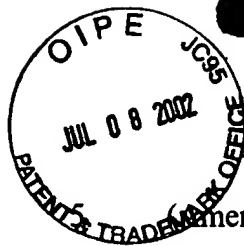
Respectfully submitted,

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Marked-Up Version of The Amended Claims

(Amended) The cable tie of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduced thickness channel is provided on [a lower] an inner side of the neck section.

6. (Amended) The cable tie of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduced thickness channel is provided on an [upper] outer side of the neck section.

7. (Amended) The cable tie of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduced thickness channel includes a first channel formed on [a lower] an inner side of the neck section and a second channel formed on an [upper] outer side of the neck section.

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